DIOCESE OF PENNSYLVANIA

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE RENEWAL AND MISSION OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

October 1969

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The Committee was formed in November 1968 by Bishop DeWitt, at the request of the Diocesan Council, with the purpose of working toward the revitalization of the local church. In this report we will describe the situation as we see it and offer some preliminary recommendations.

1. General Assumptions and the Nature of the Crisis Facing the Local Church

What is the scope of the crisis facing local churches today? There are many indications that the health of the parish church in the Diocese of Pennsylvania is deteriorating. Some of the local congregations suffer only a malaise. Come are in the grip of wasting illness. Only a relative few seem in robust condition. On a typical Sunday in the Diocese, only 3 out of 10 Episcopalians attend church. The times we live in can only accelerate the decline unless positive steps are taken to reverse it. The great majority of churches simply are not dealing with the human situation in terms of the Gospel making of religion a separate segment of life which takes the form of liturgical and social activities, but which is isolated from every important issue of life. The Church has allowed itself to become a parenthesized phenomenon in American life.

The young people now coming of age, those who would be the future leaders of local churches, are more impatient of irrelevance than perhaps any other generation in history. Pelted from infancy up by the instant realities and fictions of television, mobile as never before, they are emphatically turned off by the comfortable platitude and the comfortable pew. The reaction applies in even greater measure to young priests emerging from seminary.

The parish church has been around for a long time -- since the Middle Ages. No doubt, it will survive long into the future. But unless it is to substitute form almost entirely for power, its orientation, its image of itself - in brief, its mission - must be renewed and revitalized.

Even in churches where emphasis supposedly is on "our own," the effort frequently falls dramatically short of what Christian mission could be.

Too often the parish church has become a sanctuary, intent upon survival, rather than a Christian sign, an agency of mission.

Too often its concern is with buildings, maintenance, material effects, with a rigid structure of congregation administration which excludes, not includes.

Too often it regards the priest as the only minister in the congregation, the source of almost all leadership and action, a hired "holy man."

Too often conflict is regarded as universally bad and divisive and not as the creative force that it can be.

Too often the parish church becomes an island, isolated alike from deanery, diocese and nearby churches of other denominations.

A congregation's mission can take a hundred forms, depending on where it is and what its opportunities are. Yet many a local church seems to perform no mission effectively.

Two broad areas of congregational mission can be distinguished: internal or private ministry (to those within the church) and external or public ministry (to those outside the church), how can we improve what we are doing in each?

First, our ministry to those within the church. The parish church is uniquely equipped to minister to people in their private worlds. But how well does it do that? Does the liturgy, by dry repetition of the familiar, become an anesthetic? Is the preaching "safe," insulating the searing questions of Christ from issues at hand?

How many congregations - clergy and laity - really minister to personal problems of moment: divorce, drugs, old-age loneliness, extramarital sex, poverty and affluence? For that matter how many members of local churches really even know each other? Diocesan clergy have been astounded to discover vestry members who do not know the occupation of the vestryman next to him.

How many churches not merely open their doors to the poor and members of minority races but actively encourage their attendance?

In how many local churches in Christian education for young and adult a matter of superficial indoctrination?

The questions really are rhetorical, for the answers in all too many cases indicate dismaying inadequacies in ministry to persons in the private sphere.

Now, the ministry of the Church, of all its member, in the world: local churches cannot be expected to be prime movers in coping with all moral issues. But prime motivators they can be. And it is in this role as the disturbers of conscience that many parish churches fall short of real mission.

How many congregations, for example, have discussed, confronted, taken any action on the moral issues of Vietnam, peace and arms control, the impoverished two-thirds of the world, poverty and racism at home, the campus

ferment and many others? Perhaps it is symbolic that only a handful of parish churches in the Diocese have Christian Social Relations committees. This is hardly an ultimate test of concern but it may be an indication.

Often the reaching hand of Christian concern is extended by a tiny few. The rest of the congregation, in apathy, fear of controversy or paralysed by conflicting loyalties holds back. And in place of churches, secular agencies arouse the consciences of men against injustice and abuse of power, greed and uncaring.

Forfeiture of mission, repeated or continual, is an invitation to decay. That process is visibly at work in all too many congregations of the Diocese of Pennsylvania.

II. The Contemporary Setting of the Local Church

The local church's ministry of response must be specific, human, inclusive and related to the style, setting, and statistics of life today.

Participation in a local congregation is no longer "the thing to do" in our American society. There are revolutions in education, science, technology, and morality which challenge traditional beliefs. Galloping specializations make depth communication across vocational lines increasingly difficult. Expanding leisure presents more and more rootless mobility in the population and disengagement from traditional church and community involvements. The participation of the middle class in growing affluence and mobility means that for many absence from their home church on the weekends is a normal state of affairs.

The American population in its urbanizing society is breaking with past values because of the changing quality and style of life being shaped by the new environment. It is an environment of specialization in work and freedom in leisure, of the pervasive influence of mass communication, of the extensive effects of the computer, and of other new scientific break-throughs in many fields. The extent of this discontinuity is not yet evident. For example, a distinct youth culture is emerging, stylistic in emphasis, but on a more profound level alienated from the values of their elders, emphasizing the importance of "now". This mentality is seeking to develop a value structure compatible with the threat of nuclear annihilation on the one hand and participation in the struggle for social justice on the other. This youth culture is perhaps a foretaste of tomorrow's realities.

Technological advance, another example, seems to offer the promise of release from drudgery and the increase of leisure for many. Yet the burden of exclusion from the affluent society falls disproportionately on the Black American, along with the aged, the handicapped, and youth entering the job market. Trends indicate a growing culture, educational and financial strati-

fication in society in terms of three groups: the "managers" of society whose leisure and psyche are sacrificed to their profession; the growing number of people who must find meaning in increased leisure rather than in significant work involvement; and the permanently depressed part of the population, some 38,000,000 Americans, the one fifth of our nation living at or below the poverty level.

A third example of this developing quality and style of life can be seen in the expanding metropolitan setting of life today. Here, suburban growth promises to be less intense and urban renewal spawns new cities within the old. The well-to-do move back to the central city, while suburban industry pulls blue-collar families to the edge of the metropolis. Apartment cities tower over mid-town and suburbia. Youth and senior citizens, not families, are the exploding populations. Racial and class tensions, brought on by continued oppression arising out of personal prejudice and institutional racism, lead to the alternation of apathy and erupting violence.

The total metropolitan complex with its pluralistic life styles rather than the monolithic suburban sprawl is the setting where vital ministries of reconciliation in response to God's living action are both needed and demanded. Local congregations face three fronts at once: (1) an expanding, complex, mobile population involved in (2) accelerating cultural changes which (3) confront the people of God with an urgency for developing more effective ministries of reconciliation in today's world.

While statistics remain valuable indices of a congregation's effectiveness, the church's institutional success does not depend on statistics alone. Size and safety are not the basic issues. To follow Christ in the life-structures of this society, to probe the frontiers of Christian service, to build a witnessing community responsive to God's reconciling work - these should be among the goals of every congregation.

III. The Response of the Local Church

In his introduction to "The Autobiography of Malcolm X, " M.S. Handler makes this statement:

> "Thirty years of experience as a reporter in western and eastern Europe (have) taught me that the forces in the developing social struggle are frequently buried beneath the visible surface and make themsleves felt in many ways long before they burst out into the open. These generative forces make themselves felt through the power of an idea long before their organizational forms can openly challenge the establishment.
>
> It is the merit of European political scientists and sociologists to give high priority to the power of ideas in a social struggle. In the United States it is our weakness to confuse the numerical strength of an organization and the publicity attached to leaders with the germinating forces that sow the seeds of social upheaval in our community."

This statement applies to the ecclesiastical community as well as to the political community. Beneath the surface of the ecclesiastical community new generative forces propelled by radical ideas are building up pressures which are already cracking the walls of the old ecclesiastical structures and in time will re-shape the present organizational forms which many feel inhibit rather than expedite the mission and ministries of the Church.

The Church is not alone. Familiar educational, political, industrial, commercial and social service structures have all become outmoded. Neither is the Church the most rigidly resistant to restructuring and re-tooling. Many signs reveal a creativity of mind and flexibility of design within the Christian community which offer some reason for hoping that the religious aspect of our social revolution need not be unduly traumatic, though changes certainly will not be accomplished without some institutional turbulence and personal travail. It is in response to the potent ideas which generate the pressure for change in the Church that experimental strategies of mission and new models of ministry are being explored and devised in many places.[2]

The Committee believes that the local church can respond responsibly to the needs of its immediate environment only by re-thinking its vocation and purpose. This is an essential first step in the process of renewal and revitatlization. Each church must grapple with a number of questions concerning its beliefs about God, man and society and work out ways for its worship, structure and program to reflect more faithfully these beliefs. In this process, our theological and sociological assumptions will be made explicit instead of remaining unexamined.

The movement for renewal can find its theological rationale from St. Paul's missionary methods as outlined particularly in the First Letter to the Corinthians, chapters 12 and 13. Briefly, Paul advocates that the Church is the Body of Christ. He states that the Body is made up of many parts, each one playing a specific function. In other words, he sees specialization as essential to a healthy body. The absurdity of today's structure is revealed by the fact that we have lumped nearly every one of the tasks that Paul outlines into the job description of the contemporary minister. This has led to a situation in which as many as two thirds of the students in some seminaries indicate they cannot accept the present definition of the ordained ministry. The restructured Church will be based on a differentiation of function, on a recognition that some are called to preach, some to be prophets, some to be helpers, some to administrate, some to teach.[3]

The fragmentation of life today is so great that it is not possible for

every local church to minister creatively to each fragment. The local church will be frustrated if it expects to be all things to all men. A church's over-all purpose may be broad, but it should also have specific contemporary mission goals and objectives, determined by the needs of the particular congregation and of the immediate community.

IV. Goals for the Local Congregation

In light of the new context of the Church's mission of reconciliation and the vastly changed and changing setting for the local church, clear contemporary goals are of primary importance. Such goals should not only reflect the current realities of American life, but also accommodate and encourage further reformation within the Church itself. Too often the inadequacy of goals has resulted in the inadquate content and ordering of the life of local congregations. One recent study shows that a basic issue in church development tends to be "goal subversion." The congregation's "formal" goals (its theologically defined purposes of establishing a community of love, nurture and service) too often fall victim to its "survival" goals (its statistically defined purposes of securing more members, more money, larger buildings, and expanding organizations).

The following goals are basic to the life of a local church:[4]

A. EACH CONGREGATION SHOULD BE AIMED AT ONE OR MORE PARTICULAR COMMUNITIES OF RESIDENCE, INTEREST OR INVOLVEMENT.

Contemporary life involves people in a variety of relationships which become specific communities of interest. People are seldom restricted to one community, but they are related to a variety of communities in an intermix of concerns.

The primary community for most congregations is the residental community. There are, however, other communities of interest upon which a congregation might focus:

1. Residential Communities. Subdivisions, apartment complexes, urban renewal, retirement communities.

2. Commercial Communities. Shopping center ministries and/or ministry to the employed personnel of the center as well as to shoppers and nearby residents.

3. Vocational and Special Purpose Communities. Professional and occupational groups, business and office centers, industrial areas, medical centers, university complexes.

4. Age Group Communities. Young adults, youth, retirees, college students.

5. Communities of Special Concern or Interest. Urban issues, public affairs, civil rights, war and peace, the arts, etc.

6. Communities of Leisure and Recreation. Summer Chaplaincies, recreational communities.

B. EACH CONGREGATION SHOULD BE DESIGNED TO FULFILL PARTICULAR MISSION OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives upon which a congregation decides to focus should be set forth in its "mission design." This requires a careful reflection upon the meaning of the Gospel, a searching out of the needs and the issues of the particular community, and a projected involvement in them in such a way that God's purpose of love and justice may be furthered. To confront persons with the gospel of God's action in Christ requires the entire life of the congregation be geared to its mission task. This implies that the nature of its worship, its preaching, its teaching, its organizational structure, and its building facilities will be determined by its particular goals and tasks. The nature of its design should be determined by the nature of the communities of residence, interest, or involvement to which the church is directed.

C. EACH CONGREGATION SHOULD POSSESS BOTH A PERSONAL AND A CORPORATE CHARACTER OF MINISTRY

The ministry of a congregation has both an inner and a outer life. In each dimension there should be both a personal and a corporate character.

Within the life of a congregation there must be provided the care and the nurture of individual persons. This includes persons of all ages and conditions. Pastoral care and counseling, visitation of the sick, enabling individuals to mature Christian faith are all parts of the concern for persons which must be maintained. This concern must be shared by clergy and laity.

There is also the necessity for a healthy corporate life within the congregation. It is within this setting that individual health may be enhanced, and a deeper sense of human growth, responsibility, and maturity may be developed. As groups learn together and express their faith through worship, study, dialogue and action, the corporate church begins to have significance and movement in the fulfillment of its purpose. Adequate ordering of group life within the congregation is the springboard both to individual fulfillment and to effective mission in the world.

In its external dimension of outreach and mission there is also both a personal and a corporate character to ministry. It is individuals in the world who experience suffering, alienation, despair and injustice. It is individuals in the world who ultimately respond to the Word, as it is proclaimed by word or deed. But in our day it is equally important to recognize that the individual may never have the opportunity to respond unless the individual Christian and the congregation sense their corporate and individual responsi-

bility to work toward fulfilling the will of God in the corporate relationships of people in contemporary society, seeking to relieve the conditions and alleviate the causes of individual and group suffering and injustices. This vision of responsibility should include not only the local mission of the congregation but also its integral relation to the national and world wide mission of the Church.

D. THE MISSION DESIGN FOR EACH CONGREGATION SHOULD PROVIDE FOR FLEXIBILITY IN ITS DEVELOPMENT IN ORDER TO ADAPT TO CHANGING NEEDS

History has adequately indicated that both the focus and the function of congregations change as the world around the church changes. To accept this fact of contemporary life means that each congregation must conceive of its organization and program focus as provisional in character. To be functionally oriented the congregation must be prepared to be adaptable - to fit its structures and programs to the changing needs in the community it is seeking to serve.

Communities change, people move, issues and problems come and go. Some congregations will be larger, self-supporting, more permanent. Others will be smaller and less permanent. Innovation, exploration, and short-term task groups should be encouraged. But above all, flexibility to remain responsive to changing needs and dimensions of ministry should be a continuing quality of the life of each congregation as it seeks to be obedient to God's purpose in mission.

E. EACH CONGREGATION SHOULD POSSESS A CONTINUING SENSE OF ITS INTERDEPENDENCE WITH THE WHOLE CHURCH

A local church is a unit of the church catholic. It is not its own, but is part of the mission of the whole Church. It has a relationship with and is interdependent with every other Episcopal church and ministry as well as with churches and ministries of other communions. This fact is particularly important to remember when considering the establishment of new congregations. Nothing should be done separately that can be done co-operatively or jointly with other congregations or ministries of our denomination or other communions in terms of planning, program, financing or building. Interdependence and unity in mission today must be developed not only in theory, but in fact.

THIS SET OF GOALS ARISES OUT OF THE WORLD SETTING IN WHICH THE CHURCH FINDS ITSELF TODAY AND TO WHICH IT MUST ADDRESS ITSELF AS AN AGENT OF RECONCILIATION.

V. New Ways of Viewing the Purpose of the Church

We believe that recent theological thinking, together with rapid sociological change will modify the role of the local church. It has been suggested that the Church traditionally has been thought of as a sanctuary and that it would be more appropriate today to see the Church as a sign.[5] The word "sanctuary" conveys rather well the kind of siege mentality which all too frequently dominated the Church's self image. A sanctuary is a place of refuge situated in a hostile environment which justifies its existence by bringing men to its premises in order to protect and nourish them. For a long time, the Church conceived itself more or less in this way, as a kind of sacred vessel or receptacle possessed of saving resources not available beyond its visible circumference. The mission of this Church was to extend its unique riches to all men by laboring to contain all men.

The term "sign" is a concept which runs counter to the major premises of sanctuary thinking, and in so doing offers a radically new starting point for reflection on the Church and its mission. Unlike a sanctuary, a sign is meant to point beyond itself and to have its impact outside itself. Unlike a santuary, a sign is not an enclosure, but a disclosure. A sign performs its function not by containing, but by communicating; not by annexation, but by representation. In relation to their respective environment, sign is a humble image, a sign is co-operative; a sanctuary is competitive; a sanctuary finds within itself any action which is really important, a sign points beyond itself to where the action is. In a word, the main improvement of sign over sanctuary as an image of the Church is the quality of openness to its environment which, in application to the Church, means openness to the world.

Once the idea of sign is substituted for sanctuary as a working image of the Church, the crisis of mission assumes new proportions. It is no longer a matter of wondering if the Church as mission really has a job to do, but of wondering if the job it has to do really is being done. The real crisis of mission today is the Church's failure to function consistently in the world as a relevant sign of God's redeeming love, a failure to be present and active in today's version of the human conflict. a hesitancy to take sides, a refusal to speak out. The failure of the Christian mission today is not a failure to convert the world to the Church, but a failure by the church to see the world as the focus of its mission. This failure is due in great part to the persistent influence of sanctuary-thinking and irrelevancy in the Church today. Sanctuary-thinking turns the Church in upon itself and away from the world and its problems. Retaining, increasing and nourishing its members are its chief

preoccupations. Individual conversion and salvation are top priorities. Needless to say, a gigantic institutional structure and enormous monetary reserves are required to keep such an operation going. As long as the Church labors under this kind of self-image it will experience a dilemma between the need to retain its membership and the need to espouse unpopular social causes. A Sanctuary Church will always be preoccupied with numbers, for a sanctuary is simply a failure if it does not keep most people inside. The Church as a sign, on the other hand, is free to concentrate its energies on the demands of relevancy. For as long as a sign is communicating, it doesn't have to apologize for being small. If the Church is to emerge successfully from the crisis of relevancy in which it is now engaged, it will be through a gradual awakening to the fact that the world, and not the church is the focal point of God's saving action, and that the Christian mission is a joining in that activity in the world.

The Church has been called together not for its own sake, but for those outside its membership to serve as a sign and instrument of God's universal saving purpose. Seeing the Church as God's sign in the world does not deny its role as source of strength, nourishment and hope for the faithful, but it does raise, quite vividly, the question of emphasis and major thrust. The manner in which a local church faces this sign/sanctuary issue will be reflected in its own statement of purpose and goals, and will reveal the extent to which it is handicapped by introversion, parochialism and clericalism.

VI. Recommendations

As each congregation undertakes the task of developing its own purpose and goals, it has certain guidelines and resources that should be useful. Hopefully, this Report will be such a resource. Certainly the Diocesan Statement of Purpose should be a wide umbrella, under which we find our own area of particular ministry. The Diocesan Statement begins by quoting Paul's letter to the Corinthians - "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." Paul goes on to say that "God entrusts to us the ministry of reconcilation." Surely one aspect of a local church's purpose is to be a sign of this reconciliation; to be a community where it is real (See Appendix on the Diocesan Statement of Purpose, and the Ministry of Reconciliation).

One result of developing a purpose and goals is that the congregation has some yardstick or criteria for measuring and evaluating its program and activities. There is some basis for determining the effectiveness of parish organization and rationale of setting priorities.

The Renewal Committee recognizes the revitalization of the local church as being of critical importance to the entire Diocese, and suggests two first steps:

1. That the planning process be adopted as a "way of life" by the Diocese and by each local congregation. Planning, which we already are involved in on a diocesan level, is a process of disciplined institutional self-reflection, goal setting, action and evaluation - a process for helping the people of God to discover and to do that mission which God has "prepared for us to walk in." Planning is a creative response to change, a way of finding out what is going on in the world and relating that information to our intended purposes and goals.

2. That, on behalf of the entire Diocese, a number of pilot parishes be designated to experiment with new forms and structures of parish ministry in critical areas of need (such as public education, pastoral counseling, narcotics, peace, urban problems, liturgy). We hope that such experimentation might become a permanent part of the life of the Diocese, with constant evaluation and with the addition of several pilot parishes each year. We anticipate that the creation of such "models" would be of help to other parishes in working out their own unique focus of mission.

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Note: The Committee is indebted to the following sources, upon which much of this Report is based.

(Notes 1 and 4) "Strategy for the Development of New Congregations" Board of National Missions of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

(Note 2) "Strategies and Models for Suburban Mission" Donald J. McCallum

(Note 5) "Guidelines for a New Theology of Mission" Programa Piloto, Diocesis de Puerto Rico

(Note 3) "The Grass Roots Church" Stephen Rose

"M.R.I. Committee Report" Diocese of Delaware, 1965

APPENDIX

1. Sample Statements of Purpose for a local church:

"The purpose of _____ Church is to elect and express commitment to Jesus Christ among its own members and among those within its sphere of influence so that men and women will be enabled to participate in Christ's ministry within the fellowship and to the world in ways consistent with the tradition of the Gospel, appropriate to man's contemporary situation, and in anticipation of God's new age that is coming."

"The purpose of _____ Church is to witness fearlessly to all persons that Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior is in the midst of human life calling us to decision and to make responsible use of our human and material resources. We are to be God's servants in the places where we work and spend our days. Our purpose for gathering for worship, study, planning, and in all our groups, is to celebrate God's presence in the world and to plan for mission. These experiences free us to love boldly, and to be involved responsibly as persons and as an institution in all of life."

APPENDIX

2. Statement of Purpose for the Diocese of Pennsylvania:

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself. There is only one ministry and it is Christ's ministry. The Church, as the Body of Christ, exists to exercise that ministry to the glory of God the Father and in loving concern for all men everywhere. Having accepted Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, we are committed to the work of the Church by: (1) Proclaiming the Gospel through preaching, sacramental acts, worship services and education. (2) Witnessing to the Gospel by its application to social problems in our contemporary society by charitable acts, by counseling those in need, and by missionary outreach. (3) Governing the Diocese in such a manner as to facilitate the discharge of its responsibllities both to the Protestant Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. and to the congregations within the bounds of the Diocese."

3. Statement concerning the Ministry of Reconciliation through the Local Church (from "Strategy for the Development of New Congregations").

Reconciliation means the breaking down of those barriers which separate God and man. It also means Christian commitment to oppose the forces of evil that divide men from each other and produce enslavement, hostility, and alienation in the world. God's reconciling purpose is to make and keep men human according to the revelation of himself in Christ through fellowship with him and the acceptance of self and service to others. In Jesus Christ, God accomplished this reconciliation upon the cross, and therefore the Church is committed, through the Spirit, to his ministry of reconciliation in a broken world.

The ministry of reconciliation has certain marks of identification according to the Scriptures. It is <u>functional,</u> not propositional; it is a matter of action rather than definition. It is <u>specific,</u> aimed at particular people and crises. It is <u>contemporary</u>, applying the eternal Gospel to changing times. It is both <u>personal</u> and <u>corporate,</u> relating individuals to one another in the Christian community and the Christian community to the world around it. It sustains a <u>diversity</u> of ministries (many forms and functions) within a <u>unity</u> of mission, according to God's purpose. It <u>lives by risk</u> under the mandates of Christian obedience and conscience in being related to the conditions of humanity - freedom, war, government, and poverty. It rises above barriers of race, color, politics. economics, culture, creed - belief or unbelief - so that it is <u>inclusive</u>

APPENDIX

in its dialogue with the world. It is both interdependent and ecumenical in its search for the wholeness of Christian ministry and witness, whether in worship or in mission.

Because reconciliation includes the establishment of just relationships between persons, faithful obedience in the ministry of reconciliation often leads the Church to be involved in relationships of hostility and conflict. Peace for one side rooted in injustice for the other side represents an unjust relationship and not reconciliation according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This kind of peace produces self-justification for the dominant indvidual or group and despair and smoldering hostility in the lives of those subordinated.

The ministry of reconciliation must be as inclusive as the structures and conditions of life in which contemporary men live: the public world of the residential community, and also the communities of business, science, education, government, and leisure. In contemporary American society the Church witnesses by its proclamations, by its presence, by its actions, and by its works. The responsibility for this witness belongs to the whole people of God whose ministry of reconciliation is both personal and corporate, and whose roles are many and varied: as a catalyst in society, and as proclaimer, teacher, protester, healer, discerner, enabler, critic, questioner, organizer and planner.

God's reconciling work in Jesus Christ and the mission of reconciliation to which he has called his church are the heart of the Gospel in any age. Our generation stands in peculiar need of reconciliation in Christ. The Church is rediscovering today that God's mandate directs it into the world. It is discovering also that, through the Spirit, Christ is inviting his church to join him in those situations where order is being forged out of chaos; where human dignity is being restored and new humanity being created; where the reconciliation of men to each other is being accomplished; and where new communities of concern and involvement are taking shape.

SUGGESTED READING AND RESOURCES

WHAT IN THE WORLD	Colin Williams	NCCC	1964
THE LOCAL CHURCH AND WORLD MISSION	Douglas Webster	Seabury	1964
THE COMFORTABLE PEW	Pierre Berton	Lippincott	1965
THE SECULAR CITY	Harvey Cox	Macmillan	1965
CHURCH AND METROPOLIS	Perry Norton	Seabury	1964
PLANNING FOR MISSION	Thos. Wieser, ed.	WCC	1966
THE LOCAL CHURCH IN GOD'S MISSION	United Church of Christ		1968
M.R.I. SELF-EVALUATION AND PLANNING PACKETS	Seabury Book Store		
THE GRASS ROOTS CHURCH	Stephen Rose		
ALARMS AND VISIONS	Stephen Rose		
STRATEGY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW CONGREGATIONS	United Presbyterian Church		
GUIDE TO PARISH PLANNING P	Diocese of Virginia		
PARISH PLANNING MANUAL	Diocese of Ohio		

DIOCESE OF PENNSYLVANIA: COMMITTEE ON THE RENEWAL AND MISSION OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

Resolution to be presented to the 186th Annual Convention of the Diocese

WHEREAS, the urgent need for the renewal and restructuring of the local congregation has been expressed in many ways throughout the Diocese, and

WHEREAS, many congregations are engaged in a process of self-evaluation, seeking a more vital Christian life, and

WHEREAS, the Bishop of Pennsylvania has appointed a Committee on the Renewal and Mission of the Local Church to make recommendations to the Diocese and its constituent congregations concerning ways of working toward the revitalization of the local church, and

WHEREAS, tested materials to improve present methods of planning and a group of trained consultants are now available,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

(1) THAT the Committee on the Renewal and Mission of the Local Church be continued, and that copies of its 1969 Report be distributed to all clergy and wardens for study.

(2) THAT each congregation in the Diocese:

(a) Be requested to establish a Parish Planning Committee to set goals and objectives for 1970-71, in accordance with the principles suggested in the attached Report. As a first step in the planning process, each Vestry and Mission Committee is requested to undertake a self-evaluation of the life and ministry of the congregation. Experience elsewhere indicates that this evaluation process will take at least six hours of agenda time.

(b) Explore the possibility of forming a consultative relationship with the clergy and lay leadership of a nearby congregation for mutual assistance in the process of evaluation and planning.

(c) Where appropriate, make possible the further training of clergy and laity in the area of the congregation's particular ministry (as reflected in its goals and mission design).

(d) Assist the Renewal Committee by sharing significant experiences with it, and through it, with other congregations in the Diocese.

(3) THAT the Diocesan Council be given authority to request a number of parishes to experiment with new forms and structures of ministry in critical areas.